



FORTUNES
IN
FRIENDSHIP

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Pogue, Barton Rees.
Fortunes in friendship




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To
Dr. G. B. Wilder
from

Barton Rees Pogue

(a friend
of Dean Olt)



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FORTUNES IN FRIENDSHIP.

BY
BARTON REES POGUE

With Pictures By
WILL VAWTER

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UPLAND, IND.

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TO MY
FATHER AND MOTHER

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FOREWORD AND APPRECIATION

What shall we name the book? That was a disturbing question in January and February. One evening my wife suggested "Fortunes in Friendship." Some weeks previous to that I had started calling one of my lectures by that title and naturally supposed she had heard me mention the name or had seen it in some of my manuscripts. But when I discovered, by question, that the name was a creation on her part, I resolved at once that this book should be called "Fortunes in Friendship."

And I like the title! What fortunes I have, what fortunes you have, in father and mother, in helpmate, in people, in the woods, in things, in flowers and in children! Truly such fortunes are greater than those of silver and gold.

* * * * *

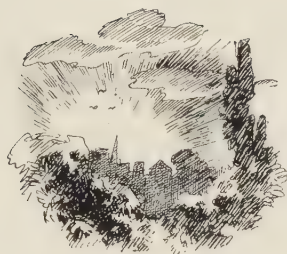
Again I must express my most sincere appreciation to Dallas Lore Sharp, of Hingham, Massachusetts, and Lester C. Nagley of Indianapolis, Indiana, for their most valued assistance in preparing these manuscripts for the press. These two men have contributed largely to my own "Fortunes in Friendship."

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FORTUNES IN FRIENDSHIP

MEN who gather gold and silver,
 In their bonds and bank accounts.
Urge on me the zeal for riches
 In their kind and like amounts,
But if I can't make a fortune,
 To be spent in afterwhiles,
I can gather golden friendships
 In my little town of smiles.

Friendship's a glad little village,
Lying in green, valleyed-jade,
Where the people are happy and smiling
And fortunes in friendship are made.
Yearly and daily my village
Is having a building boom,
And I'd like it to gather its millions,
For surely there's plenty of room.

Next door I have father and mother,
And with me my God-given wife,
And on the same street my relation,
The very first friends of my life,
And not far away, all the people
I've met through the happy years,
Since first I began buying friendships
With laughter mixed with tears.

So let this be my fortune, this village
Where everyone smiles and is kind,
Where believing and giving and helping
Are the fruits of heart, hand and mind.
This is gold quite enough for my coffers!
Here are bonds that meet every desire,
Where God is both King and Father,
And love a consuming fire.



DOWN TO THE TOWN OF SMILES

LET'S go down to Friendship,
 Down to the town of Smiles!
The highway of Laughter
Leads down there, and after
We're there,
Each smile is a prayer
That nothing but Love
From our Father above
 Shall enter the hearts of mankind.

Let's go down to Friendship,
Down to the town of Smiles!
The streets of the city
Are called "Jolly," and "Witty,"
And "Grin,"
And "Try It Agin,"
And we can't lose our way,
For they've sign boards that say:
"Smile, and you're always at home!"

Let's go down to Friendship,
Down to the town of Smiles!
They don't have a mayor,
Or city surveyor,
Or "cop,"
Or winky-blink signs that say "Stop;"
To smile is the law
And you never saw
A statute so gladly obeyed.

Let's go down to Friendship,
Down to the town of Smiles!
While our troubles unravel
In laughter, we travel
Down there,
Where each smile is a prayer;
And the people, we'll find,
Are never unkind—
Now smile and we'll soon be there!



AREN'T FRIENDS GREAT!

AREN'T friends great!
I couldn't do without 'em!
There's something good about 'em,
Makes a fellow sorto hanker-like and wish
He was really well acquainted
With the sinful and the sainted,
With the beggar and especially the rich,
So that here or there or yonder,
Anywhere a soul might wander,
He could always have a welcome from some friend.

Friends are surely great!
If you're in the dumps on Sunday,
You'll be over them by Monday,
If you've got a first-rate friend to grip your hand.
He'll slap you on the shoulder,
Like he's crackin' up a boulder,
And you'll feel a good deal better for the shock;
He'll ease you on your sorrow,
And you'll whip the world tomorrow,
And you'll do it all because you had a friend.

Make more friends!
Some folks'll scratch and "holler"
To make a filthy dollar,
But I would rather make a trusted friend.
You can't tell what funny caper
May come on your bonds and paper
That you've sweated, worked or cheated for so long.
Why, a dollar's so elusive,
There's no evidence, conclusive,
That it's really yours to have and keep and hold.

But a tried and trusted friend!
He'll be with you night and mornin',
When it's sunny, when it's stormin',
And the turns of fortune always find him true.
He'll be with you when you're cheery,
He'll be with you when you're weary,
He'll be with you, makes no difference what you do.
Don't you slight and spite him,
Love him, and delight him,
And you'll always be a-sayin', "Aren't friends great!"



FRIENDS

I'VE met them in the city, and I've met them at the shore,
And I've met them in the places that I'd never seen before;
But of all the friends I've cherished, and of all I call my own,
There ain't none that's half so steady as the country friends
I've known.

These fellows from the city get so het-up with success,
With the things that they are doin' and the things that they
possess,
That they often let their mem'ry settle back a cog or two,
And they don't warm up partic'lar when I tell 'em,
"Howdy do."

But the country folks keep human, kind o' stay down on the
ground,
And they always greet me gladly when I chance to drift
around;
Never see them get big-headed, though they own the county.
Grant,
And are doin' things successful that some other fellows can't.

I may travel out to Frisco, or to India, or Japan,
And may gain all the honors that a common fellow can,
But I know full well fer sartin, that my welcome never ends,
With the honest set of people that I call my country friends.



GOOD OLD LAND OF HAIN'T AND TAIN'T

I LOVE the land of "hain't and tain't"
Where a feller "kin" or else he "kain't,"
And style is scarce as rail-fence paint—
Good old land of "hain't and tain't!"

It's "them there things," or, "no they hain't,"
And "his'n" and "her'n" without restraint;
Now I know grammar, but I ain't no saint,
For I love the land of "hain't and tain't."

The men are real, the girls are quaint,
And they don't rely on clothes or paint
To make themselves be what they "ain't,"
In this honest old land of "hain't and tain't."

Here people are happy and free from complaint,
From early dawn till the dusk grows faint,
There's rest and comfort and hearts are "containt"—
Ah, good old land of "hain't and tain't!"



HOME

THERE'S a charm in that word that an angel once heard
And labored to capture its theme,
That his choirs might sing at the throne of their king,
An anthem of earth's dearest dream.

But angels must miss a mother's warm kiss,
And all that a home means to men,
So this one in tears, and bent with the years,
Slowly turned from his tablet and pen.

Had I but the tongue to sing as they've sung,
I could fashion that theme into song,
For I've known all this that angels must miss,
That only to men can belong.

I'd sing of the brooks and the orchard play-nooks,
The barns, the birds and the bees,
The grazing flocks, the hills and the rocks,
The flowers, the fields and the trees.

There's the welcoming lane that says, "Come again,"
And memory often recalls
The long winter nights and the bright Christmas lights,
And the clatter of kids in the halls.

Ah me, what a dream! And it flows like a stream,
Past the gates of my heart to-night,
And beckons me on to the youth that is gone,
Then fades, ever fades from my sight.

But there's ever a song through my whole life long,
A song gleaned from sunshine and gloam,
Of our sorrows and joys, of the girls and the boys,
Of Father and Mother and home.

MOTHER'S DAY

I'LL wear a flower for Mother, Mother's Day.
You'll wear a flower for Mother, Mother's Day,
 And that flower will be a prayer
 That our mothers, everywhere,
 May be conscious that we care;
And we'll wear a flower for Mother, Mother's Day.

I'll be writing to my Mother, Mother's Day.
You may write your Mother, Mother's Day,
 And the fragrance of the rose
 Will perfume the letter's close,
 Making poetry of prose,
When we're writing to our Mothers, Mother's Day.

I must go to see my Mother, Mother's Day.
You may go to see your Mother, Mother's Day,
 And in that happy hour,
 Memory will wear a flower,
 Daffodil and summer shower,
When we go to see our Mothers, Mother's Day.

I'll wear a flower for Mother, Mother's Day.
You'll wear a flower for Mother, Mother's Day,
 And that flower will be a prayer
 That our mothers, everywhere,
 May be conscious that we care;
And we'll wear a flower for Mother, Mother's Day.



THEY'RE A-WAITIN' THERE FOR ME

WHEN I've finished doin' errands
For the firm I'm with out here,
I shall strike for Indiana,
T'other side of Rensselaer,
To a cozy little cottage,
Hid in flower and spreading tree,
Where my daddy and my mother
Are a-waitin' now for me.

Always waitin', always longin'
From one visit to the next,
Couldn't get along without me
More'n a sermon could a text;
And I ain't a-sayin' nothin'
About stayin' out this way,
For I need to see the old folks,
More'n a sinner needs to pray.

I can see 'em waitin' for me,
Loaded down with eagerness
And a little more excitement
Than they'd willin'ly confess;
But it's not for me to offer
Any jest upon their state,
For my thoughts are more chaotic
Than I care to estimate.

I can hardly wait to finish
With the job I'm at out here
So's to start for Indiana,
T'other side of Rensselaer,
For I know the corn's in fodder
And there's gold in every tree,
And my daddy and my mother
Are a-waitin' there for me.



THE DAY OF DAYS

I HADN'T put back to the port of my youth
For many and many a day,
And I got to thinking about my folks,
In a wishful sort of way,
Till I closed my desk, and took the train
With plans for a great surprise—
And you should have seen my mother's face,
Seen the light of joy in her eyes,
When I opened the door and stood in the room;
And heard my father say,
"Well, well, well! I declare! I declare!
Our boy has come home to-day."

And me! I felt like a kid again,
I let out a wild "Hurrah"
And danced the prettiest "Merry O"
That anyone ever saw.
I hugged them both and kissed them, too,
And hugged them once again;
And through the tears their faces shone
Like a rainbow through the rain.
Then sat we down to laugh and talk—
About my buy and sell?
Ah, no! About the days of yore,
And the things they had to tell.

And so the day wrote out its rhyme,
Then laid aside its pen
As night came on to clothe the hours
With moods of sacred ken.
Ah me, what hours! What hours those were!
That ripe old man, Content,
Was snuggled in our chimney seat
And beaming his assent.
The firelight painted dreamy scenes
About the settle place,
And traced broad lines of peacefulness
Upon each happy face.

“Good night, my boy. Sleep tight, my lad,
Dream happy dreams,” they said,
Then mother brought an extra quilt
And tucked me into bed.
She kissed my cheek with trembling lip,
Then whispered, soft and low,
“This day, my boy, has brought to us
A joy you can not know.”
That hour I made a solemn vow,
And sealed it with my lips,
To never again neglect “my folks”
For deals, and business “tips.”



THANKSGIVINGS LONG AGO

IN the days when bees were hummin',
I recall,
How we ust to wait the comin'
Of the fall,
For the time in bleak November,
'Twixt the middle and December,
That we always shall remember
Best of all.

When the trainman loudly hollowed,
"Francesville,"
Then I donned my cap and followed—
What a thrill!
There was Grandpa at the station,
Gayest man in all creation,
Huggin,' kissin' his relation
With a will.

And at home our Grandma waited
In the door,
With a love as unabated
As of yore,
In her eye a merry twinkle,
On her face a little wrinkle,
But the very kind of wrinkle
You'd adore.

Smell of wood smoke so delicious
 Filled the place,
And the weight-clock, still ambitious,
 Wiped his face
With his hands and called out gaily,
 "Time for supper, friends," and "raily"
I could hardly wait the daily
 Words of grace.

But when Grandma did her bakin',
 Turkey-day,
There was nothin' could have taken
 Us away,
Pies and cookies, bread and chicken,
And we didn't fear a lickin'
If she caught us slyly pickin'
 From a tray.

Those Thanksgiving days of pleasure
 Are no more.
We must go to memory's treasure
 For the lore
Of her ginger cakes and dressin',
And her gentleness and blessin',
But we're happy that she's restin'
 Evermore.



THE HOME-COMING

PERKINSVILLE or old Vincennes,
Vevay, Winamac,
South Bend, Hobbs or Tailholt,
Sullivan, Cammac;
Name any town in this whole state,
I'm not particular which,
And each has got its followers
'Mongst the idle and the rich.

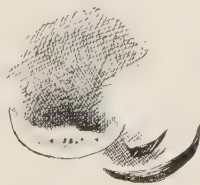
Set out sometime to advertise
A settler's jubilee,
For all the folks that's come from there,
Like Allen, Kurtz and me,
And you'll see us with our offspring,
Come piling in your grove,
In wagon-bed, and limousine,
And Fords as they "are drove."

We went last year to Perkinsville,
On the river near Lapel,
Where father taught a district school
And knew the people well.
Oh, that was years and years ago,
When I was only three,
But every "girl" I met that day
Had jogged me on her knee.

I never saw such shaking hands,
Such greetings and such cheer,
'Twas quite enough to fill the heart
And last the live-long year.
'Twas, "Doctor Will!" and "Howdy, Joe!"
"By doggie, here's old Glen!"
"I ain't seen Charm, and Dollie Gray
For goodness-sakes knows when!"

Some one would say, "I know you, Dan,
But you don't 'member me."
And Dan, he'd squint across that face,
Like up a possum tree,
And turn and say: "I ought to know,
Just wait now—let me see,
Well, dog-my-cats! Well, I'll declare,
If it ain't Jimmy Lee!"

We ate, and laughed, and talked old times,
And told 'em we was fine,
And asked each other, "How's the folks?"
Or, "Where is Emmaline?"
From ten o'clock till almost five
We didn't do nothin' but chin,
And when we drove away at last
We "lowed" we'd come ag'in!"

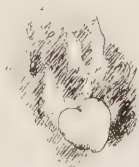


TO MY VALENTINE

CAN'T you remember in days of yore,
When you were little and ever so "pore,"
And I was rich in flocks and tents—
A pocketbook and fifteen cents—
That I sent to you, oh, lips of wine,
A merry, merry valentine?

Can't you remember the blush on your cheek
When you took the first little, teeniest peek,
And saw my name in trembling hand
Written there at my heart's command?
'Twas the first you knew, oh, love of mine,
That I cherished you as my valentine.

"To my Valentine," it said,
"Cherries ripe and roses red!
Who lives for you lives always, dear,
And lives the happier each year."
How true those words, oh, wife of mine,
And you'll always be my valentine.





MY LADY OF DREAMS

I KNOW the dearest little lady,
In a home that's far from here,
Where the lanes are long and shady
And it's springtime all the year;
For Winter never settles
On the love I have for her,
And the flowers are never nettles
In her love and character.

'Tis a privilege to know her,
Lily form and haunting grace,
Ah, the angels will adore her
When they see her honest face.
And her charm! Beyond the seeing
Lies a soul akin to God—
Through the pathway of her being
Shame and sin have never trod.

There she stands with pink sunbonnet,
By the open, swinging gate,
In her heart a soulful sonnet
To the lover she doth wait.
And tomorrow I'll be going
Down the path that leads out there,
Where the lilac blooms are throwing
Perfume kisses everywhere.

She's the gift of God, this lady
Of the home that we call ours,
Where we have a cottage, "Shady,"
Peeping shyly through the flowers;
And all of life we'll wander
Arm in arm, and hand in hand,
And upon each other, squander
Love, just as God, our Father, planned.





ON THE ROAD TO SHARON

ON the road to Sharon,
I'm not a-carin'
If the night is wild and bleak,
And I ain't a-swearin',
As tumblin' and tearin',
I follow the bouldered streak,
A-windin' and wearin'
Its way through the clearin',
Past gates that swing and creak,
Past pine trees a-starin',
And white houses glarin',
And cross-roads so cross they won't speak.

Oh, I'm goin' down to Sharon
With a joy beyond comparin'
 With all the joys I've ever had before,
For my little, God-gift lady
'Sgot a bouncin', red-faced baby,
 And our house won't be so quiet any more.

Go to Sommerset from Sharon,
Catch the train that goes a-tearin'
 Through the country to that little harbor town—
I can see the litle sniper
In his woolen shirt, and diaper,
 A-sleepin' there so cozy in his gown.

Couldn't go by way of Boston,
For that way would be a-costin'
 Too much time from East Walpole to Sommerset,
So I walk five miles to Sharon
Through the night, but not a-carin',
 For I haven't seen the little fellow yet.

On the road to Sharon,
I'm not a-carin'
If the night is wild and bleak,
And I ain't a-swearin',
As tumblin' and tearin',
I follow the bouldered streak,
A-windin' and wearin'
Its way through the clearin',
Past gates that swing and creak,
Past pine trees a-starin',
And white houses glarin',
And cross-roads so cross they won't speak.





OLD FATHER TOCK

"HOW many hours," said Old Father Tock,
"Do you think I have ticked from this old clock?
It's been sixty-three year since I started to turn
Out the minutes and hours from this tick-tock concern,
And if you should count them I'm sure you would find
I've kept pretty close at my daily grind—
Keeping the ticks and tocks in pairs,
Assembling the minutes in my up-stairs."

"And what do you think," said Old Father Tock,
"That I may have seen while making up stock?
I've seen a young farmer come in with his bride;
And if I had tears I think I'd have cried
The time he brought home a little high-chair;
And the mother taught her children their very first prayer.
I've seen parties and weddings, and long winter nights
When the old folks sat reading by kerosene lights."

"And what do you think," said Old Father Tock.
"That I may have heard from this old clock?
I've heard the clatter of grandchildren come,
With fathers and mothers, and fife and drum,
And the shouts of a grandson leaving the house
With great ginger cookies tucked into his blouse;
And I've heard Grandma say, in her kindly way:
'I'll have to be baking most every day.' "

"And how do you think," said Old Father Tock,
"That I may feel toward this multiplied flock?
I feel like using my hands in applause
For the way they support the homemaker's cause.
They show by the joy there is in their life
That home is a pleasure, not mis'ry and strife;
And when they say grace at the family board,
I almost stop ticking and worship the Lord."



SINCE ANNA AND JESS ARE GONE

OUR house is kind of lonesome-like,
 Since Anna and Jess are gone!
They moved away to Boston town,
Where streets are crooked and beans are brown.
And they don't come in to talk any more—
There's never anyone that comes to the door
And says, "Hello, any body at home?"
We might as well live in Havanna or Nome,
For the house is quiet and lonesome-like,
 Since Anna and Jess are gone!

Our ice-cream making is a thing of the past,
 Since Anna and Jess are gone!
No one calls-up from the place next to ours,
To say there's milk, and, before it sours,
We ought to make a freezer of cream.
Why, I don't even have a happy dream
Of home-made cream and the girl's white cake—
I don't ever have the stomach-ache,
For our parties and pains are gone to rust,
 Since Anna and Jess are gone!

We haven't much call to borrow or lend,
 Since Anna and Jess are gone!
No one comes in to chat half an hour,
Then ask the loan of a cup of flour:
And Jess and I don't gossip now
Over the horns of his garden plow,
For the folks that moved in when they moved away
Don't seem inclined to mingle that way;
And there's not any call to borrow or lend,
 Since Anna and Jess are gone!

We don't go places like we used to do,
Since Anna and Jess are gone!
The last place they went is so far from here
That we'll not see them for more than a year.
It don't seem right not to hear them say:
"Suppose we go down to Windfall today?"
There's parties and picnics, but we don't go at all,
Since they went away from here last Fall—
We don't do nothin' like we used to do,
Since Anna and Jess are gone!



WHEN THE WOMEN GO AWAY

THE women folks have gone away,
They've left me all alone,
To wrestle with the pots and pans
And victuals' vast unknown.
They left me with a recipe—
Two eggs, one cup of flour—
My pancakes looked like rattan mats,
And tasted thick and sour.

The women folks have gone away,
They've "left me on my legs,"
And all on earth I know to cook
Is eggs, and eggs, and eggs.
So every day and every way,
At breakfast, dinner, lunch,
I fry them hard, I fry them soft,
A quartette in a bunch.

The women folks have gone away,
They said, "Don't get the place
To looking like a little kid
That hasn't washed his face."
And so each meal I do my dish,
Each day I sweep and "red,"
But when they come I'll bet they say,
"Who helped you make your bed?"

The women folks have gone away,
I'm lookin' for them back,
For while I keep this house in shape
My farm work goes to rack.
And, too, I'd like to sit again
Astride a table leg,
And eat a meal that never saw
The shadow of an egg.



THE YELLOW DOG FROM HOME

HAVE your traveled?

Yes, I've traveled.

Been away much from your heath?

Well, I have and very seldom

Am I out but what I find

Someone gettin' off a sayin'

That's a little o' this kind:

"I've been gone a month from Stringtown,

And by the starry dome,

I'd be glad to have the seein'

Of a yellow dog from home."

Do I jeer him?

Do I scorn him?

Do I tell him he's a fool?

Not if I'm within my senses

Do I relegate this chap

To the junk heap of the foolish,

For he's not a mental scrap.

But I tell him, "Well, old comrade,

Sure's a rooster's got a comb,

I'd be tickled, too, a-seein'

Of a yellow dog from home."

You're from Stringtown?
I'm from Carthage,
North and west from Connersville,
 Guess we're not exactly neighbors,
 But we're from the Hoosier state,
 And bein' brought up social
 Ought to mingle here first rate.
We'd be friends in Indiana,
 Let's be friendly on the roam,
I'll be one and you be 'tother—
 Two old yellow dogs from home.



AT THE CLOSIN' OF THE DAY

QUITE often of an evenin', wife and I
Take a little time for restin', as the night draws nigh,
And sittin' here we listen to them bullfrogs croak—
Me a-fightin' skeeters with my evenin' smoke.
We can hear the whip-poor-will, makin' answer to the thrush,
And across the pink of evenin' comes a holy hush.
Seems that all our cares and worries are banished plumb away
For it's peaceful, oh, so peaceful, at the closin' of the day.

The nicker of the horses echoes back from field and lane;
The wind is windin' slowly through the timothy and grain;
There's the chatter of the chickens and the lowin' of the herd,
And me and mother lis'nin' without sayin' of a word.
Sometimes readin', sometimes hummin', but more often quiet-
like,
A-watchin' of the shadows as they lengthen on the pike.
Seems the Lord of earth is with us, and invitin' us to pray,
For it's peaceful, oh, so peaceful, at the closin' of the day.



CALL ME "MORT"

I'S down in old Hancock last week,
And met a friend of mine
That owns a fertile piece of land
Not far from Brandywine.
His name is Morton Allender,
Don't call him that for short,
For all the folks that knows him well,
They always call him "Mort."

I met him at the county seat,
And hailed him that-a-way,
Although I hadn't seen him much
For twenty years, I'd say.
He liked it though and said to me:
"I don't feel like I ort,
When people say their 'Howdy-do's,'
Unless they call me 'Mort.'

"I don't like 'Mister Allender,'
For that's too dignified,
And makes me feel like I was old
And kind of ossified.
They called me 'Mort' when I's a boy,
And I am still the sort.
That feels more friendly-like and young
When people call me 'Mort'."

We're all like that, unless, perhaps,
We've let some fool success
Convince us that we're better stock
Than when they called us "Wes."
I hope I never get so fine,
My head "reined-up" so short,
That I can't greet and fellowship
The folks that call me "Mort."

THE LITTLE OLD HOUSE OF LONG AGO

'TIS a little old house of long ago!
I've passed it so often and noticed of late
How the windows are out, and the door-step low
Is sunk in the earth by the heavy weight
Of the massive timbers and sagging roof,
Where mossy patterns on clapboards grow—
Ah, our little old house of the long, long ago!

I frequently muse on the long ago
As I pass this ruin of clapboard and logs,
And I think of the fireplace, its fervid glow,
The guns hung above it, and the hunting dogs
That hovered around on cold winter nights,
List'ning, and thinking of tracks in the snow
That went with the hunts of the long, long ago.

Of mornings and nights, in the long ago,
Father would read from the Bible, and pray,
Read in a voice so kindly and slow,
Pray God to keep us day by day;
And when he had finished, he'd say: "Amen"—
I remember it well, so soft and low,
As a benediction from the long, long ago.

Our customs were strange in the long ago,
With huskin' bees, spellin's and singin' schools,
The raisin' of barns, the way we'd sow,
And harvest by hand, with home-made tools;
We cradled our babies and we cradled our grain,
And the ladies wore hoops and bangs, you know,
In those pioneer days of the long, long ago.

Just seeing this house of the long ago
Takes me back to the days of the dim, fleeting past,
When the children ran, like winds that blow,
Around the old house in their play, and I've asked:
"Can ever there be such times again
As we had with Father and Mother and Joe
At the little old house of the long, long ago?"





ON LONG WINTER NIGHTS

ON these long winter nights,
When the rain-barrel cracks, and the eaves
Are hung with long pointed icicles that scrape
In the wind, and the snow, like an old-fashioned scarf,
Is carefully tucked under Mother Earth's chin,
I like to be home by the old heating stove,
With the kids at their play, or reading their books,
Their mother engaged in some needle pursuits,
And me cracking walnuts, or popping of corn,
Or seeing if hogs have gone up a cent.

Why, there's no place like home
When the wagon wheels crunch on the pike
And frost paints each window with fantastic forms,
Or covers the bald headed hinge-pins with hair!
If ever I like my little old nest
I certainly do on these long winter nights,
When the weather man shouts at our doors
That it's going to be zero and ten below
Before he's through with giving to us
His idea of what a winter should be.

But he don't worry us!
His wrath only gathers us up,
Like water helps gather the butter wife churns,
As together we joy in the warmth of our fire
And the fellowship that warms our hearts.
Sonny at play, Toots at her book,
Their mother with sewing and mending to do,
And me, just loafing a little maybe,
But happy, like them, for our home and our hearth,
While I'm cracking the nuts for the fudge they're to make.

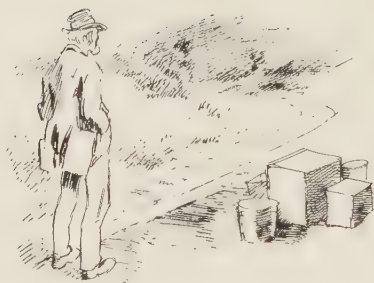
THE FOLKS BACK HOME

When there comes an hour of leisure,
I delight to sit and dream,
From the milk of recollections
Skim a little of the cream.
Many friends from many places
I have gathered through the years,
But I say to all who know me,
As I look out through my tears,
That wherever one may journey,
Wheresoever one may roam,
There are never ever any
Like the folks back home.

With the red-plush fam'ly album
To direct me through the maze,
Of the grown and crowded present,
I return to other days.
There's Site Rankin and his child'ern,
Ozroe Wiggins and his marm,
Folks that lived across the Monon
From my father's little farm.
Here I find a faded picture
Of that dear old fam'ly place,
Where the scenes I knew are altered
Like the changes in my face.

But it's home! Though years have stumbled
 'Cross the threshold to the past,
The friends that I have known there
 Can be counted to the last,
Dearer every time one meets them,
 And full of confidence
In the youngster that has left them
 For some other residence.
Though you're gone you're not forgotten—
 'Round the great fire-place at dusk,
They recall the times you spent there,
 Danced and played old "Money Musk."

Just such dreaming makes me lonesome,
 And I'd like to close the house,
Pack my telescope and satchel,
 Don my faded traveling blouse,
Board the train for Indiana
 Where the fields are broad and wide,
And the friends will come to meet me
 Like the moving of the tide.
For wherever one may journey,
 Wheresoever one may roam,
There are never ever any
 Like the folks back home.



WHEN THE TRAIN COMES IN

'LONG about Chris'mas, no use to deny,
There's never a day that a train goes by
But what I'm down to the little depot,
As anxious as a youngster at a three-ring show,
For this is the time that the kiddies begin—
Oh, most any day they'll come droppin' in
To spend hol-i-days with mother and me,
The jolliest lot you ever did see!
It's just for fear that the child'ern'll come
An' no one to meet them with "Howdy" and grin
That I'm always 'round the depot
When the train comes in.

'Long about Chris'mas, for many a year,
I've done this thing for the joy and cheer
At being on hand when the folks get off.
Course, some of you fellows will laugh and scoff.
But the pleasure that comes to my old heart,
With meetin' the youngsters and having a part
In luggin' their baggage, and creatin' clatter
As we pile in the sled with laughin' and chatter,
Is better than havin' great heaps of gold.
Why, there's nothing finer than to meet kith and kin
Down around the depot
When the train comes in.

'Long about Chris'mas,—they all come but Jim,
And I always keep an "eye out" sharp for him,
He left one day before the World War,
A little off color—never knew what for—
And he hasn't writ back to give his address—
He's movin' around too much I'll guess.
We've wondered a lot if he went overseas
And got shot down, or caught by disease.
My, I'd like to see 'im! Why, I'd take 'im to my heart
If he was the only and original sin—
Down around the depot
When the train comes in.

'Long about Chris'mas, no use to deny,
There's never a day that a train goes by
But what I'm a-lookin' for our prodigal lad
To jump off the cars, and hug his old dad—
You say he won't come? Well, I've got this to say,
I'll never lose hope tell the jedgement day.

* * * * *

Then the long train stopped. I was blind as a bat
With hot, burning tears, and I lost my old hat
As he hugged me, and I hugged him—
Why, I couldn't keep from cryin', a-knowin' it was Jim—
Down at the depot
When the train came in!



A MAKER OF QUILTS

I KNOW an old lady of eighty-three,
A maker of patterns and quilts is she.
There she sits all day and pulls the thread,
As she mixes the gray, the blue and the red
Of a "Blazing Star" or a "Humming Bird,"
And laughs if you say, you have always heard
That she is the best in all the land
At making of patterns and quilts by hand.

Oh yes, she knits, but a quilt-top, you see,
Is this old lady's hobby at eighty-three;
And when you visit, she brings them out,
Such patterns and colors as fairly do shout!
She's an old-fashioned soul with those old-fashioned ways.
And remembers the best of the pioneer days,
When alone, she sings an old-fashioned air,
'Tis this: "I'll soon be at home over there."

So this old lady is quite content,
Although her body is feeble and bent,
To sit all day with needle and thread,
And neatly join the gray, blue and red
Of an "Old Woman's Trouble" or "Double Nine Patch"—
"Oh, there, what was that my eye did catch?"
"Ah," replied she: "'Tis 'The Hour Glass' you see."
That dear old lady of eighty-three.



WHEN A FELLOW'S SICK

IF you ain't too sick, it's kinda nice
In the course of a year, once or twice,
To be laid up, for a little spell,
Not awful sick, but still not well—
Just about enough so's the neighbors'll learn
Of your sorry plight and show some concern—
Call up the house on the party line,
Or drop in a while with a quart of wine,
Or some chicken broth, maybe some flowers,
And a choice bit of gossip to lighten the hours.
You will find out then the friends you've got,
So, its fun to be sick, if you're not sick a lot.

When a fellow's sick, they serve his meals
To him upstairs, and ask how he feels,
If the bed is soft and the pillow right,
And does he want a shade on the light,
And what can they fix that he'd like to eat—
A soft poached egg? A bit of meat,
Ground up fine and boiled for broth?
And would he like a woolen cloth
To put on his chest; and liniment,
Or maybe some soda and peppermint?
My! they wait on a fellow!—hurry and trot—
It's fun to be sick, if you're not sick a lot.

When a fellow's better and gettin' about,
The folks'll say, "Glad to see you out!"
And everyone sayin' that they're so glad
You're over that little spell you had,
And hopin' you'll mend, now, right along,
And nothin' again will ever go wrong,
All kind-a sets a man up to say,
"I didn't know folks would care this way."
You've felt all along that you weren't much good,
Or rated very high in the neighborhood,
But you change your mind when you get "upsot"—
So it's fun to be sick, if you're not sick a lot.

BEAU NIGHT

CAN'T you recall, how in days of yore,
At three o'clock or maybe four,
Or five, of a Sunday afternoon,
You'd a little rather, or just as soon
Hitch your "rig" to the picket fence,
And loaded down with confidence,
Enter the house to play your part
In winnin' a lady's guileless heart?
With a package of Sen Sens, and cut-away clothes,
A big four-in-hand, and striped hose,
We've gone to the parlors with faces alight,
For Sunday was Sunday and always beau night.

And the poor old horse would stand and stand,
While you were holdin' the lady's hand.
Poor old horse, but wonderful hand!
Wonderful! wonderful!! wonderful hand!!!
And the poor old horse would paw the ground,
While you were slippin' your arm around
The back of the sofa, carelessly there,
And tryin' to act like you didn't know where,
In the course of time, saucer and cup,
That arm of yours would be finishin' up.
Oh, we've been there, and there wasn't much light,
For Sunday was Sunday and always beau night.

Your horse would whinny—softly cursin' these trips—
But he didn't know you were pressin' her lips,
And he had no way to even guess
That she was sayin' that wonderful "Yes."
But he surely did know you were tryin' your hand
At stretchin' the night like a rubber band
Into two or three times its normal length,
And wasting his patience as well as his strength.
Well, those days are gone, and the "rig" that was real
Has long been replaced by the automobile.
Their outfits now are speedy and light,
But Sunday's still Sunday and always beau night.





THE CHORDS I KNOW

The chords I know are just B flat,
And maybe, G or C,
But the music I get from those simple strains
Is my soul's own melody.
They're simple enough to be understood,
And easy to play, you know,
For these old hands can't finger the strings
Like they did in the long-ago.

The women make fun, and say, they wish
I'd get another tune;
And ask me to leave their portion out
If I would just as soon.
But if they knew how my heart leaps up,
To hear one simple chord,
They'd not be makin' fun of me,
No more'n they would the Lord.

Whenever they're gone, I lift the lid
Of the instrument's dusty case,
And tune each string, from the treble down
To the resonant, vibrant bass,
Then let the tunes of days gone by
Drip from the musing bow,
Like honey dripped from the orchard bloom,
In the lands of the long-ago.

I wonder if in Heaven they'll have
A corner where I can go,
And play this soul of mine to rest
With the chords I used to know?
If they don't I might as well stay out,
But I think there's a place for me,
Where I can play at old B flat,
And maybe G or C.

THAT LITTLE GIRL SMILED FOR ME

THAT little girl smiled for me,
Smiled when I was glum,
And as I looked old Winter went
And Summertime was come,
I smiled a smile to answer her,
I could not scowl or frown,
She smiled, and I smiled,
And the bars of gloom came down.

That smile of hers bade worries cease
And gloomy glooms disperse,
And said, "It warn't no earthly use
A-livin' in a hearse!
Of course some day we'll ride in one,
When health has passed its prime,
But what's the sense of loadin' up
Before the proper time?"

Joy came down the lane again
And there, in quietness,
Waited now to give to me
The milk of happiness.
Twilight shades were all about,
Peace was on the land,
Hope was in my heart again,
New life was at my hand.

For that little girl smiled at me,
Smiled when I was glum,
And as I looked old Winter went
And Summertime was come.
I smiled a smile to answer her,
I could not scowl or frown,
She smiled and I smiled,
And the bars of gloom came down.





OLD MAN AND HIS PIPE

THE old man never has much to do
Except smoke his pipe,
But he and the briarwood are good, warm friends—
His favorite type
Is a short-stemmed kind with monst'rous bowl
That's made to hold
A fire over night, or while the best
Of his yarns are told.

Some years ago a minister, put
A damper on him—
The fellow that preached at Puckerditch Church
Had a funny whim,
As how a man who knelt to pray
Would never talk through,
To the pearly gates of the brighter world
If his breath was blue.

The old man thought for many a day
Then quit the green,
But he's the loneliest mortal then
That ever you seen.
He'd walk all day 'round the house and barn,
A-twistin' his hands,
A-dreamin', I thought, 'thout the aid of his pipe,
Of them beautiful lands.

But his face grew pale and his cheeks grew thin—
He wasn't himself
With his favorite pipe, now empty and cold,
There on the shelf;
And many a time, 'round the open fire,
When the boys would light
Their pipes with a coal, I've seen him sit
With his lips shut tight.

We's enjoyin' life that way one time,
When he sez 'e,
"Boys," kinda raisin' himself to the shelf,
"I cain't jes see
Why the Lord would hold it agin a man
Fer smokin' a pipe,
Unless, of course, the feller himself
Was as mean as tripe!"

As he lit his pipe, a wholesome smile
Was on his face,
And it seemed he prayed that night for us
With a better grace.
Next morning he stood in the old barn door
So comfortable like,
His gaze far away, and takin' in
The Puckerditch pike.

The smoke curled up around his hat,
And drifted slow
Toward those lands where the old man wants
That he shall go.
Now I'm not up on theology
Of any type,
But it ain't no sin as I can see—
Him a-smokin' his pipe.

NO REASON TO COMPLAIN

ASK him how he is,
And, in answer to your quiz,
You will hear his quaint refrain,
"Ain't no reason to complain."

Ask him in the mornin',
 He will have just that to say;
Ask him in the evenin',
 And he'll answer, same old way.
Ask him how he's feelin'
 When the spring is on the hills,
Or in the solemn winter
 When there's sufferin' and ills,
And you'll always get your answer
 In his casual, quaint refrain,
"Well, I guess there ain't no reason,
 Ain't no reason to complain."

He lost his boy last winter,
 'Twas an awful blow to him,
I could see the old man waver
 As he said, "Good-bye" to Jim,

For they wuz bud and buddie,
In their business, in their play,
And it seemed like it would kill him
For it all to end that way.
When I asked him how he's feelin'—
Up and answered, through the pain,
"Well—I guess there ain't no reason—
Ain't no reason to complain."

When a fellow's got his fortune,
And his health ain't put to bed,
I can see how them there sayin's
Are quite easy to be said,
But when your joy has left you
And you're on the brink of night,
It takes a heap of courage
To keep sayin': "Things are right."
If you can, why, you're a blessin',
You're a rainbow through the rain,
And you're helpin' us by sayin',
"Ain't no reason to complain."

Ask him how he is,
And, in answer to your quiz,
You will hear his quaint refrain,
"Ain't no reason to complain."

CAROLEE

THE very soul of laughter, Carolee.
Bring your dancing curls and come to me.
 Tell me why you love your daddy,
 Tell me how you hurt your paddie,
 Tell me what you did with "Laddie,"
 Tell me all, my little lady,
While I trot you on my knee.

The very gods adore you, Carolee,
Adore your love and laughing witchery.
 Didn't Juno give you being?
 Didn't Venus see you, fleeing
 From Olympus, without seeing
 You had stolen all her graces,
Bringing blessing to your mother and to me?

Men and angels love you, Carolee,
Angels and our gentle, sweet Adee.
 Seems I love you more than other,
 But the graces of your mother
 Are those constant ecstasies that hover
 O'er you like a benediction—
And God must love you better than do we.



THE OLD MAN WHITTLES

THE old man sits and whittles,
Whittles away—
Never says nothin', jes' whittles,
Whittles all day.
'Pears like he's whittlin' for wages,
But maybe he's connin' the pages,
Writ by the Kankakee sages,
For he don't fashion nothin' partic'lar,
Jes' whittles away.

It's Time the old man whittles,
Whittles away—
Whittlin', like shavin's, the minutes
Off of the day.
For when a man's old and rheumatic,
And can't wield a hoe or a mattock,
There's thoughts pile up in his "attic"
That can best be expressed by whittlin',
Jes' whittlin' away.

So the old man sits and whittles,
Whittles away—
Never says nothin', jes' whittles,
Whittles all day.
Left alone, his thoughts are kneelin'
At the spring of love and feelin',
Drinkin' mem'ries, that come stealin'
From the hills of all that's past—
While he whittles away.

AGE SINGS A SONG OF LOVE

FIFTY years we've lived together,
Years of happiness they've been,
As we've followed them through silver,
Up from cotton, wood and tin.
First as playmates, then as sweethearts,
Then as hopefuls, man and wife,
We put our feet upon the doorstep
Of a cottage, and of life.

There've been struggles and reverses,
We've had trials and distress.
But through storm we've seen the promise
And the bow of happiness.
We've been minded not to worry,
We've been minded to observe
All the laws of love and kindness
Without question or reserve.

Year by year we've clipped the coupons
On the bonds of love we own,
And the greater our affection
The more profit they have shown.
We've invested our devotion,
And the yearly dividends,
On the fellowship we've fostered,
Bring us happiness and friends.

We've been more than wedded people,
Living hapless year by year,
Bound together in a union
Of convention or of fear:
We've been partners, pals and sweethearts,
And we're more in love today
Than we were back there in sixty
When we started out this way.





WHEN THE COWS COME HOME

WHEN he left us we stood watching by the old yard gate,
Here at home we had our parting, as the sun's red weight
Dropped behind the hills of Walling, and the whip-poor-will
 was calling,
The whip-poor-will was calling, softly calling to his mate.
We linked our arms together in the bonds of pain,
And our flooded eyes united, that in vision we might gain
One last meagre, broken measure of our only hoard and treasure,
As he climbed the hill out yonder from the deep, green lane,
Then atop the rise there, calling, stood our laddie gaily calling:
"I'll be with you in the evening when the cows come home."

We were lonesome, oh, so lonesome with the lad at war,
And we asked each other often what it all was for.
Though we smiled, our hearts were sinking with the lonesome-
ness and shrinking
From the awful thoughts of carnage that our souls abhor.
Yet rememb'ring what he shouted from yon hill's round crest,
Neither one of us could murmur, never anyone has guessed
That behind the gift of smiling there was pain and anguish
piling,
Piling up like thunder-drumming storm clouds in the West.
When we heard the cow bells clinking, we were always think-
ing, thinking,
"He'll return to us some evening, when the cows come home."

Many years now he has been there, 'neath the cold French sod,
Where the poppies red are blowing and the grasses nod.
O'er his head a cross is standing, not a large one nor com-
manding,
But it marks a spot where armies of the world have trod.
Weeks and months we waited for the lad's return,
Creeping hours we waited, with a frantic, wild concern,
For some news about his welfare. Though we knew he'd
fought in Hell there,
We had never dreamed that Fortune would send back a word
so stern.

His return we're not demanding, yet we wish that he were
standing
Here to greet us in the evening when the cows come home.

We're so lonesome in the evening, and we seek to gain
A little cheer and comfort for our hearts' dull pain,
By climbing, as the light fails and the birds begin their night
tales,
To the hill-top rising yonder from the deep, green lane.
And standing there together, looking blindly through our tears,
Through the valley's gath'ring shadows and the anguish of
the years,
Just to see the paths he followed, from the place where he last
holloed,
Paths that lead to days eternal where all sorrow disappears:
And to hope that in some gloaming, when our spirits take their
homing,
We shall meet him in the evening when the cows come home.

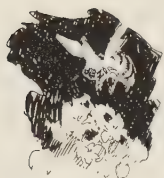
WHEN IT'S SPRING

WHEN the days get hicky-dicky,
And your clothes feel sorto sticky,
And you want to pull your shoes off—then it's spring.
Hain't no need to tell us fellers
'Bout the water in your cellars,
That the equinox has struck us and it's spring.
We don't give a rap fer figgers—
It's the sun that pulls the triggers
Of a million pent-up leaf buds on the trees,
Makes the grass sit up and notice,
And you don't care where your coat is,
When old winter's up and dusted with his freeze.
You can 'pend on weather bureaus
Fer your knowledge, but I'm sure of
Jes' one item in this world of changin' things—
When Haz Wilson's huntin' burlap
And he asks you, "Seen my pap?"
Then I'd bet my bottom dollar that it's spring.
'Cause he's fixin' up fer seinin'
Though he knows his dad's a-claimin'
That a feller ought to work his 'rithmetic.
But young Haz hain't much fer study,
Him and me and Charlie Duddy
Ruther'd spend our days a-loafin' round the crick.

'Pears like every leaf and pebble's
Got their voices pitched in trebles
Jes' to welcome us with glad and cheery song;
And the water in old Brandy
'Sgot a feelin', warm and dandy;
Makes a feller want to seine the whole day long.

When the days get hicky-dicky,
And your clothes feel sorto sticky,
And you want to pull your shoes off—then it's spring.
Weather men, they set the seasons,
But don't listen to their reasons
For the air gets warm and balmy when it's spring.





IN THESE FIRST OPEN SCENES

IN the spring when each tree puts her silky things on,
And the crops are asleep with their window shades drawn,
There's a brazen little flower that lifts up his face
To laugh for the toiler, and brighten the place;
But I like him best with yellow corn-pone,
When he's made warm friends with a good ham-bone,
So I'm glad to see in these first open scenes
The time when the women pick dandeli'n greens.

It has been 'most a year since I tackled a mess
Of ham-end and greens, and I'll have to confess,
There's a dum-funny notion's got into my head
That a corner of me is a bit underfed.
You can talk of autumn and them good punkin pies
Or of winter and wheat cakes that none would despise,
But I need, I must say, in these first open scenes,
The tang and the tonic of dandeli'n greens.



OH, COUNTRY MINE!

WHERE threads the stream of Brandywine,
A country lies, whose fields are mine;
Whose every hillside, fertile nook,
From Hinchman's woods to Sunnybrook,
Seem all my own.
Not to possess nor till for gain,
But just to wander through and claim
As country, that in days of yore,
Was mine—flower, stream and Sycamore—
My swimming-hole, my woods, my calm retreat;
A country hallowed by the feet
Of many a barefoot Greenfield boy!
Spread wide thy arms, oh, Brandywine,
Embrace and kiss this country mine!

A thousand tongues I would employ
To word the thrill of childhood's joy,
At pulling off my shoes and socks
To shin across the shells and rocks
Of that dear stream.
Then climbing up the slippery banks
By Hinchman's farm, to see the ranks
Of dancing marigolds that whirled
Across the marsh. Not all the world
Can hold a scene that's half so dear to me—
Before my eyes a dance I see
That puts a world of art to shame.
This charge I make to thee, oh stream—
Hold fast these fairies of my dream.

Fairy flowers! I've picked them oft,
Then wandering home through evening's soft
And spendthrift flood of crimson gold,
I've piled them in her lap and told
Again my love.
Oh, Mother mine, could I but be
A lad again, and live with thee
Through those high days of summer sun.
O'er dusty roads I'd romp and run,
Cut my 'nitial on a beech,
And steal away to bayou driti

Where daisies throng the hills, and lift
Their vested forms in choirs of praise,
While Brandywine the music plays.

Oh, country mine! Oh, country mine!
For thee with heart of love I pine.
I cannot be thy suitor now
Nor walk with thee 'cross evening's brow
As oft I'd love.

But still I know that thou wilt hold
In sacred trust my love of old,
And when I come to wander there,
I'll find, as in those days so fair,
That thou art true to one who paid thee suit.
New love for thee now takes its root
Within my heart, for I am gone
To lands where flows no Brandywine,
Nor lies a country fair as mine!



THE UNCOMPLAINING WOODS

WHEN I grow weary of the selfishness and contentions of men I go forth into the uncomplaining woods

“to list to Nature’s teaching,”

to reestablish my faith in God and man.

The woods have a soul—a sympathetic soul, aye, the very heart of a mother. You of the world dislike me, find fault with what I do, make trouble for me, or sicken me with your empty praise; but like my own dear mother the woods reach out arms of love to welcome me, the woods believe in me, comfort my sad or lonely heart and speak only truth in commendation.

The woods live at peace—there is no strife. True, every blade of grass, every plant, every tree is reaching greedily for the sun; but neither denies the other his right to be. Animal life is not at war for kingdoms of winter store, and “the complaining brook” seems to murmur only because it can not reach farther and wider its arms of succor and sustenance. Somehow these people of the woods know how to live together in the melody of close harmony.

If I can occasionally make my habitat in the uncomplaining woods and commune with her sympathetic soul, I can return to the dolorous paths of a complaining world, believing that God in His own time and way will bring mankind to know the true efficacy of “peace on earth, good will among men.”



ROSE TIME IN SHARON

IT'S rose time in Sharon, I know,
In the woods where the wild flowers grow,
And roses, old-fashioned, to me
Are tokens of lost ecstasy,
For long, long ago in the springtime,
In June, when the winds were at play,
I gave her a rose for our friendship;
And the night was a moon-tinted gray.

Again, in the hey-day of noon,
When the earth was a tip-toe to June,
We met where the roses entwine,
Where hearts drink a new kind of wine;
And there in the glow of the noontide

 I gave her a rose of perfume,
This second for love that was proven;
 And the day was a cavalier's plume.

But after the sunshine comes rain!
All our dreams were but profitless gain!
They required her to wed for a name,
For fortune, position and fame.
We met, and I gave her a rose-bloom,
 A third for our love's constant strength,
An emblem of steadfast devotion
 That should live through eternity's length.

It's rose time in Sharon, I know,
And the heart of me hungers to go
To yon little spot of the world
Where roses of spring are unfurled,
For there, long ago in the springtime,
 In June when the winds were asleep,
I kissed her good-bye and we parted;
 And the night was a fathomless deep.



A TREE

I'M tired, but when I see a tranquil tree
A mystic something calms and quiets me.

I'm weak, but when I see a mighty tree
The pulse of girding strength possesses me.

I hate, but when I see a patient tree
A poignant sense of shame comes over me.

I mourn, but when I see a stretching tree
Its arms of love reach out and comfort me.

I laugh, and when I see a nodding tree
I know that it is laughing, too, with me.

God's gracious gift to man, a tree.
Ah, let me live where trees can counsel me.

NOON

NOT evening tide, but noon!
An interval of rest that halves the day
Of toil, with melody as sweet
As lullabies that mothers softly croon.
The temperature of morn
Did swiftly mount beyond its common mark;
The pulse of nature throbbed with feverish haste,
And flushed the face of Spring's new born.
But noon! The heart of earth
Doth slow its maddening surge, and silence falls,
Deep, sublime, on all the world,
And nature calms her riotous pulse of mirth.
The horses gladly share,
And there, around the fountain of their dreams,
They drink their thankful toast to rest
That hangs upon the summer air.
When the noon-day meal is done
The tired "hand" seeks the spot where sun and trees
Have laid a spread of light and shade,
Where the webs of dreams are spun.
Not evening tide, but noon!
An interval of rest that halves the day
Of toil, with melody as sweet
As lullabies that mothers softly croon.



INDIAN SUMMER

THE woods are turning yellow now,
Cobwebs in the air,
In rhythmic waves of silv'ry sheen
And melody, declare
That Indian Summer now-a-days
Is come upon the land,
To fill the soul of everything
With dreams, upon demand.

The saucy squirrel is busy here
 With storing winter goods,
And yonder moves a noisy troupe,
 Pilfering the woods.
A band of happy rovers they,
 In search of winter stores,
So boy and beast hold contest now
 In nature's golden out-of-doors.

The studious woods, leaf by leaf,
 Is turning through her text.
For of the lessons she must learn
 She'll study Winter next.
She thumbs them one by one at first,
 But swiftlier each hour
She hurries them into the past
 In fluttering, golden shower.

The corn in rows stands silently
 With drooping hand and arm,
The call to rest was heralded
 At dawn from farm to farm.
The tide of life has slowly turned,
 The Samson strength'ning sap
Has laid its crown of summer power
 In Autumn's tempting lap.

DREAMY DUSK

Dawn

Noon

And dewfall—

Dewfall and dreamy dusk.

I choose for mine the dewfall,

Dewfall and dreamy dusk.

The air is chill,

The whip-poor-will

Calls lonesomely from yonder hill.

The crescent moon,

Like a goblin spoon,

Will dip into the star-bowl soon.

The leafless boughs,

The low of cows

Enhance the evening's mystic drowse.

Beneath the trees

The languid breeze

Is resting now among the leaves.

The daylight wanes,

The darkness gains,

And now the katydid complains.

What joy! What bliss!

Like an angel's kiss

Is all the ecstasy of this.

Dawn
Noon
And dewfall—
Dewfall and dreamy dusk.
I choose for mine the dewfall,
Dewfall and dreamy dusk.



OCTOBER SILENCES

SUMMER is gone; and like a robe, dropped from the shoulders of a dancer in some flashing roundelay, the shimmer of October silences falls upon the land, and all is still.

The sanguine struggle of summer is ended. There is no more mating, no more growing, no more reaching upward—even the sap has ceased to flow. Life is at the flood, the ebb tide ere long begins, and then the earth, for very need of rest, will lie in the warm sun and dream.

All about one are the silences—the caw of a crow, the chirp of a cricket, the long rows of fodder, the leaves that one by one go to make their beds with heroes of the past. The whole earth is like a great concert hall now closed, these last sounds echo like the final strains of a grand symphony.

October is a mood, and one can scarcely fail to enter into its sorrow, a sorrow that is not the lament of death, for October is but “the sunset of the seasons—the preparation of another dawn.”



LATE AUTUMN IN THE WOODS

THE sands have run and Autumn's day is done.
Winter slowly draws the robes of dormancy
About the woods and settles them to rest.
Huge forms that once were frame and casement
Of the Summer's leafy lodge stand gaunt and stark
Against the sullen skies.
The brook, that shouting little truant of the hills,
Now sobs and moans, and wends his thoughtful way
Past rendezvous of death.
The leaves, ghosts of a ravished summer-time,
Drift here and there before the wilful wind
Like gnomes before the dawn,

And somewhere, there between the dawn and dusk
Of all this dolorous change, I sit alone,
Content to let my heart be sad, and break
Its box of oil upon the feet of pensive thought—
Not memories, for yesterday is dead.
The spring of something new is in my brain.
In spite of what or where we are, we ever dream
Of something yet to be, of better days
When drab hopes will kindle fires of green,
And like the spring leap up in living flame.
But neither year nor plan is at the Spring for me,
For it is Autumn, late Autumn in the woods!
Defeat and death supremely sit the world.
There is no sound in all these wooded halls
And I've been dreaming dreams.



THE GOOD OLD-FASHIONED TUNES

WHEN the evening lamps are lighted, and the dancing, glancing
 glow
From the fireplace floods the chimney-seat and falls athwart
 the snow,
Witching spirits come to haunt me, make me dream of yester-
 day
When I was but a carefree child and the world was white with
 May;
Draw me out into tomorrow with its foibles and its cares,
Where the soul that knows no Helper, fails to rise and soon
 despairs;
So, while Past and Present mingle with their gay and gray
 festoons,
I like to hear the playin' of the good old-fashioned tunes.

I have heard the sweet-voiced singers and the masters of the
 bow,
Who belt the globe with concerts that the best musicians know,
And I've wondered, as I've listened to some grand old sym-
 phony,
What the players and their leader could do that hour to me
If they'd start off sort o' sudden-like, with "Comin' Thru the
 Rye,"

"Oaken Bucket," "Love's Old Song," or the "Sweet Bye and Bye."

Ah, they'd set my heart a-bobbin' like a little toy balloon,
If they'd swing into the chorus of some good old-fashioned
tune.

There's "Carry Me Back to Old Virginy" and "Old Black
Joe,"

"Annie Laurie," "Swanee River" and "Sweet Chariot, Swing
Low,"

They're the kind that set you hummin', make your heart pull
out its stops,

Use its knee swells, pump the bellows till it's touched the moun-
tain tops.

Tain't the words so much that stir me, but the movin' melody,
Deep and soothin'-like, and freighted with a rare divinity.

You may like the jarring jumble of these blazzy, jazzy loons,
But there's nothin' feeds my fancy like the good old-fashioned
tunes.



THE ICING IN THE PAN

SIMPLE food and gorgeous dinners,
Camp-fare, picnic, hotel, home,
Every sort that men have eaten
I have tasted, meat and comb,
But of all the viands offered,
All the dainties known to man,
There is nothing beats the flavor
Of the icing in the pan.

I have praised the worth of sweet corn,
I have lauded to the skies
All the virtues and the merits
Of my mother's pumpkin pies,
Yet somehow these foods and others
Seem designed more so for man,
But the morsel made for kiddies,
Is the icing in the pan.

Oh, the baking days of mem'ry!
When the cake so mountainous
Donned its robes of creamy splendor
Like a knight victorious.
Then to hear my mother saying,
"Now see here, my little man,
Don't you want the job a-lickin'
Of the icing in the pan?"

And I'd lick it to the bottom,
Scrape and cut it to the core,
Then sit there a-softly thinking,
"Wish to goodness there was more!"
Memory of youthful bygones,
Sweetest thought, now I'm a man,
Is the sweet vanilla flavor
Of the icing in the pan!



TO THE LITTLE TOY MILL

LITTLE toy mill, you grind no grist;
 You haven't a bag on your floors;
Your fan-wheel whirs from morn till night,
 But trade never comes to your doors.
And yet, you grind a grist for me,
 I watch you hour on hour,
Your mills are full of dreams for me,
 My soul can use your flour.
I think, sometimes, my life's like that,
 A turn, a whir, a roar,
And all my doing seems to find
 Me here, and nothing more.
But then, perhaps, I grind a grist
 Of vision for some soul,
And what seemed loss is gain at last
 If he but reach his goal.

WHO KNOWS?

WHO knows, who knows
Where the West Wind goes
When he passes our house in the night?
I hear him laugh, I hear him moan,
I hear him howl, I hear him groan.
He strolls around our house and croons
Melodies and sleepy tunes,
But no one knows,
Oh, no one knows
Where the West Wind goes
When he passes our house in the night.

Who knows, who knows
Where the furnace fire goes
When my daddy says it's gone out?
I hear him shake, I hear him sneeze,
I hear the clatter of his knees.
I seeked it up the chimney flue,
But that's a silly thing to do,
For no one knows,
Oh, no one knows
Where the furnace fire goes
When my daddy says it's gone out.

Who knows, who knows
Where Father Time goes
When he's tick-i-ti-tocked a day?
I hear him tick, I hear him tock,
I hear him walking through our clock;
He never hangs his scythe up here,
But keeps on reaping, year by year.
And no one knows,
Oh, no one knows
Where Father Time goes
When he's tick-i-ti-tocked a day.

Who knows, who knows
Where the doughnut hole goes
When I've eaten the crispy part?
I asked my mom, I asked my sis,
I asked the Zion preacher this,
And all he said was, "Little chap,
I think you're talking through your cap."
So, no one knows,
Oh, no one knows
Where the doughnut hole goes
When I've eaten the crispy part.



GOOD-BYE, MARCH

OUR rich uncle, March, came to visit with us,
Thirty-one days he stayed with us.
We met him that night at the twelve o'clock train
Ever so glad to see him again,
For our nephew, January, was crusty and rough,
And Cousin February generally gruff,
But Uncle March, though a whimsical sketch,
Sometimes a saint and sometimes a wretch.
Has the power and means within his control
To make us merry as old King Cole.

Yet you never can tell how rich uncles will act,
For, though you may treat them with kindness and tact,
They're likely to give you a gum-drop, instead
Of settling a fortune upon your head.
The fortune we wanted was thirty-one days
Of Spring, in a rollicking, bud-bursting phase,
And what we got—oh, why should I tell,
When you can remember it ever so well?
The winds were murmuring love to the trees,
That night we went down to meet the old "squeeze,"
And daddy was saying: "You've come like a lamb,"
But our rich uncle, March, was as mum as a clam,
And, though we were hoping his lion was dead,
I had a fool notion running loose in my head
That, in spite of our meeting him down at the train,
We'd be happier seeing him off again.
And as sure as you live, that's the way it turned out,
He was troubled all month with the pesky old gout
And, though we petted and coddled the chap,
He was constantly threatening to give us a scrap.
Most every time we gave him a pill
He'd swear he would leave us all out of his will.
My daddy, sometimes, he'd get uncle cooled down
And then hurry out to work in the ground,
But just about time he was starting to plow
That old fellow would learn of the matter somehow,

And stamping and swearing he'd raise such a fuss
My daddy'd unhitch and come settle the muss.
Oh, me, what a time we had in those weeks
While that old fellow sat blowing his cheeks!
So good-bye, uncle March, I'm so glad you can go
With all of your baggage of sleet and snow.
We thought you would bless us, but you weren't aware
How much we did for your comfort and care,
So we won't even help you down to the train,
For fear you might like it and come back again.





THE PATIENT LITTLE MAKE-BELIEVE

The spring is here and I'm a lad
'At likes to fish 'ist awful bad,
But pop's out plowin', and mom, she'll say,
That she's too busy to get away—
I wish that folks with little boys
Could learn to know what a kid enjoys.

With my pole and play-like bait
I drop a hook an' line and wait
To see the cork go wiggle-ti-bob,
But it's a long and cheerless job,
For play-like fish in our rain tub
Don't seem to care for play-like grub.

But I'm not going to fuss and kick
'Cause pop can't take me to the crick
And I'll pretend this tub's a "hole"
Where fishes swallow your line and pole,
And though it ain't 'ist what I wish
I'll play all day at 'catchin' fish.

MY GLORIOUS FOURTH

CHRISTMAS DAY and the Fourth of July
Are the two best days of the year,
And the rest of the wearisome three-sixty-three
Might just as well never appear.
They get no welcome from boys and girls,
Like Christmas and Fourth of July,
To answer the question why they come
I'll leave for the grown-ups to try.

If I could have some words to say,
When the calendar men convene,
I'd ask for a lot of those two days
With some birthdays in between—
A Christmas day, and a week for rest,
From that event, and I,
Would be ready then for three birthdays,
And the glorious Fourth of July.

I'd like to arrange the years like that—
Just holidays and rest,
With a year to last but thirty days,
Or thirty-one at best,
With Christmas time coming twice each year
And Fourth of July 'bout three,
For the Fourth of July is a better day
Than Christmas day to me.

You see, at Christmas, some presents I get
Are "useful" and "just what I need,"
And make me as happy as a fish would be
With a bucket of chicken feed.
But the things, on the Fourth, that Dad gets for me
Are "useful" in blasting the sky—
Bet the people in Mars are glad each year
There's only one Fourth of July!





THE STORY HOUR

TELL us a story, Mother,
Of griffins, and elves, and bears,
And all about the bad little boy
That went to bed upstairs;
And tell us, too, 'bout the man in the moon
What's got a mole on his chin,
That's not a really mole at all,
But just a dimple turned in.

I wonder, Mother, if ever there was
 A real, real Raggedy Man,
And if he ever married sometime
 His sweetheart, 'Lizabuth Ann?
And do they have, there where they live,
 A little wobble-ly calf
That, when the Raggedy leads him out,
 Makes everybody laugh?

And didn't Orphant Annie, Mother,
 Have awful much to do?
It must have been quite very late
 When she was getting through.
She'd wash the cups and saucers up,
 And brush the hearth and sweep,
And make the fire, and bake the bread
 For just her board and keep.

There's the Pixy People, Mother,
 And the nine little goblin elves,
And the old Whing Whang that holds his breath,
 And the squids that swaller themselves.
Please tell us about the Alex boy
 That storied about them bears,
And—does the goblins get bad boys—
 That doesn't say their prayers?

THE YUM-YUM TREE

LAST night at the groc'ry, my dad bought for me
A jolly, jolly, jolly old yum-yum tree,
And this morning it's full of Christmasy things,
Presents, and candy, and corn on strings;
There's teeny, tiny lights, lots of tinsel and snow,
And a tin-foil star that reflects the glow.
I said, "Yum, Yum," when I was but three,
And mother said we'd call it our "yum-yum tree."

So ev'ry year now we've a yum-yum tree,
As loaded with "fruit" as it can be—
Yum-yum books and yum-yum toys,
Dolls and trains and things for noise,
And yum-yum presents for mother and dad—
Most every thing we'd wished we had.
There's goodies for your tummy and goodies for your heart—
Where did the "yum-yum" ever get its start?

My mother says, in the "Land of Yum"
There's mammoth trees that grow chewing gum—
Some grow candy and some grow skates
And others grow dishes, tea-cups and plates,
But there in the midst, from some marvelous root,
There stands one tree, growing all kinds of "fruit."
You never can pick all the gifts it will bear,
And no one can take it away from there.

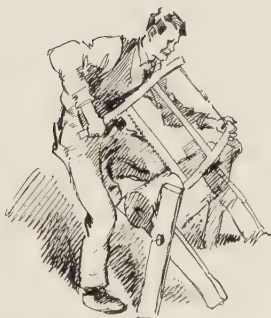
If you ever cut sprouts from the yum-yum tree,
It'll grow right up like it used to be,
And these here sprouts, when they're put in the ground,
Grow the little yum trees where our presents are found.
My, I'd like to visit the "Land of Yum"
And pick a whole bushel of chewing gum!
But since I can't go I'm happy that we
Can have this jolly, jolly "yum-yum tree."



'T WAS CHRISTMAS DAY

'T WAS Christmas day, and all through the house,
Nothing was quiet, not even a mouse.
Drums were beating and little boy Joe
Was firing his cannon at Grandpa's big toe;
Up in the attic, with vigor and noise,
The "Thistlebloom teacher" was spanking bad boys;
From out of the parlor came the rattle of trains,
Where the railroad magnate sat counting his gains;
The dining-room table was ensconced with a game;
The toy duck had waddled until he was lame;
Music-tops, marbles, "fiz-wigs" and balls
Rattled and clattered and banged through the halls.

'T was Christmas day! Who cared for the din,
Or looked for the cotton his slippers came in
To chink-up his ears, and to warm his old soul,
Sittin' by a fire of slow, snoozy coal?
Grandpa is eighty, but called for a horn,
And Grandma didn't mind if you stepped on her corn;
Daddy's a brick and Mother's a bun,
And the whole kit and boodle had heaps of fun.
Nobody was spanked, put to bed upstairs,
Or made to ask pardon that night in his prayers,
For 'twas Christmas day, and all through the house,
Nothing was quiet, not even a mouse.



JUST SAW WOOD

DON'T blow your horn, or advertise
Your virtues to the world;
Don't put your talents on parade
With banners all unfurled;
If the folks you know, don't seem to see
That you are mighty good,
Don't sell 'em "specs" to help their eyes—
Keep mum and just saw wood.

While people a hundred miles from here
Are talking of your worth,
The folks at home may hardly know
That you are on the earth,
But don't enlighten them, my friend,
The way you feel you should,
Although you'd like to prophesy—
Keep mum and just saw wood.

The city papers may sing your praise,
The big men speak your name;
The things you do for human kind
May bring you lots of fame,
But in your town you'll probably stand
Just where you've always stood;
Don't rant and call your neighbors fools—
Keep mum and just saw wood.

For he who saws is sure to sit
By fires that never dim—
The work he did in those dull years
Will all come back to him.
And when the home-folks join the rest,
To praise him for his good,
He'll thank the Lord he kept his peace,
And silently sawed wood.

A LITTLE BAD AND A LOT OF GOOD

YOU may live a life of virtue,
 You may live a life sublime,
You may be four-square and honest
 And truthful all the time,
But if ever you should stumble,
 Take a tumble from that plane,
You won't rise so very quickly
 From the shadow and the stain,
For you'll find, my worthy neighbor,
 As most any fellow would,
That a little bit of evil
 Spoils a mighty lot of good.

You may be a careful housewife,
 Clean and neat in all your ways,
You may be a cook of excellence
 And elicit little praise,
But let your house get dirty,
 Just for once wear shabby dress,
Scorch some dainty you are cooking
 And you'll hear enough, I guess.
You can tell the "Ladies Union"
 And they'll tell the neighborhood,
That a little bit of evil
 Spoils a mighty lot of good.

You may be a perfect husband,
Clean your shoes when you come in,
Do your work in tip-top order,
Keep the money rolling in,
But if you should make an error
You would hear somebody say
That you're always making blunders
In a "dumbell" sort of way.
Sweetest visions turn to nothing,
And you'd leave us if you could,
When you find, a bit of evil
Spoils a mighty lot of good.

It's the once that ruins the many.
We're all looking for mistakes,
And we seldom praise a fellow
For the happiness he makes.
We can kick him when he fumbles,
We can scold him when he fails,
But we never think to praise him
When his fish are big as whales;
And you'll find as you go forward,
As most any fellow would,
That a little bit of evil
Spoils a mighty lot of good.



THE THINGS WE NEED

THE only things we seem to need
Are the things we haven't got,
Last week we wished it might be cold,
And now we want it hot.
If the wind blows east we want it west,
If west we want it east,
And if we all were millionaires
We'd want the pile increased.

Our little girl don't need a doll,
She needs a baby cart,
Her mother made her a johnny cake
But she wants an apple tart.
It rained last week, we didn't need
The rain we got today;
It's sure to turn as dry as dust
When we're through making hay.

Our corn is doing fine this year,
A bumper crop, they say,
But what we really needed most
Was lots of oats and hay.
Last year, when we had small-grain crops,
As sure as you are born,
The weather man held back the rain
And so we had no corn.

It's funny how we mortals here,
Somehow can't be content
With what we get, and not desire
The earth and firmament,
But all the time you'll notice it,
And notice it a lot,
The only things we seem to need
Are the things we haven't got.

THE SUCKER LIST

HE gave me the "tip"

And I bought,

He sold me some "stock"—

I was caught.

Five hundred dollars in "gilt-edged shares,"

Sold by a fellow who knew his wares,

Sold to a fellow who was glad to assist

In getting his name on the sucker list.

"You're on the ground floor

For a 'kill' "—

I'll leave you that "kill"

In my will.

Dollings this time, Hawkins before,

The next will be Wellington, Hookfish and Core.

"You're a wide-awake man," that's the talk they "grist."

In gettin' a man on the sucker list.

We wonder why fish

Are so frail,

And yet they won't bite

At a nail,

But the brains evolved from Plymouth Rock

Are eagerly seeking for watered stock,

Though buncoed and flimflammed, they still insist

On getting their names on the sucker list.



WE GOT TROUBLES

WE got troubles!

There's flies in the house, a mouse in the milk,
A greasy spot on Ann's new silk;

There's rust on the clothes, starch in the sheets,
And the cloth's not clean where Grandpa eats;

There's ants in the sugar, chickens in the truck,
We made some candy and had no luck;

The jelly's thin and full of bubbles,

My, oh me, but we got troubles!

We got troubles!

There's hogs in the corn, rust in the wheat,
Blight on the 'taters and mold on our meat;
There's a new disease in the chicken flock,
And an up-to-date ill has struck the stock;
There's a knock in the tractor, a plow share's bent,
Town prices "came" but ours, they "went;"
The oats is short, ain't nothin' but stubbles,
My, oh me, but we got troubles!

Do we have troubles?

We fume and fuss and get out of fix
'Cause things seem to go at sevens and six,
But what if we lived like some folks must,
Ragged and cold and munching a crust?
And what if death and disease would fall,
Storm or fire take crops, home and all?
I guess what we've growled at would seem only bubbles
When compared with those who really have troubles.

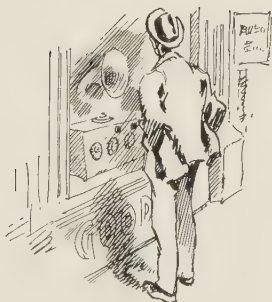
WHEN WE GET WHAT WE WANT

IT'S not what he gets that's of int'rest to man,
Nor what he claims and owns,
But the things he hasn't, are the things for which
He hungers, and labors, and groans.
He'll sit up nights and dream while he sleeps,
How to spend his hard earned "pelts,"
For man is that way—when he gets what he wants.
He's certain to want something else.

We wanted a Ford. We bought the tin Liz,
And scooted around for a spell,
Declaring to others, "The big cars are nice,
But this fits our needs quite as well."
We talked that way, perhaps for a month—
Until I had changed fan belts—
And then we got thinking the Lizzie was nice,
But we'd rather have something else.

We wanted to have a phonograph,
And oh, we wanted it so!
But now we're tired of the records we own
And we're pricing the radio.
We have an ice-chest, but we want one of those
Where the ice-pack never melts,
And when we get that, we're certain to want,
We're certain to want something else.

The shops are full of the things we want,
The advertisements, page on page,
Create a desire that makes Dad's pay
Look like a Hindoo's wage.
He can't make enough to buy all we want,
From Oxfords we go to felts,
But get what we want, we are sure not to want it,
We're certain to want something else.





YOU AND YOURS

YOU think that everything you own
Is quite the best on earth,
But what we have is "filthy rags,"
And trivial in its worth.
When I come down to visit you
Its always "you and yours,"
You ought to paint it on your house,
And write it on your doors.

Your radio, your daughter Jane,
Your farm, your house, your wife—
To hear you talk, you've got the edge
On all the best in life.
I can't chime in and say my say—
When you get on the line,
You simply will not let me in
To talk of "me and mine."

Your radio is not the best,
It has a rotten tone,
We have a super het'rodyne
And that's the kind to own.
We always have the latest thing,
The finest of the line—
'Twould take no seer to see, the best
Has come to me and mine.

But you can't see it, somehow, though—
You don't attempt to see!
You're always looking at yourself
And never once at me.
You write, you talk, you act, you dream,
And from them all there pours
A constant and abundant stream
Concerning "you and yours."

DETOUR

YOU have met them, you have seen them,
 You have muttered, so have I,
We have wished for gifts of magic
 To remove them, you and I,
But our murmuring and wishing
 Only left them there secure,
For they stood up in the highways
 And with boldness said: "Detour!"

Oh, we do the signboard's bidding,
 Though it sends us thirty miles
Over roads that men have chosen
 To produce inverted smiles.
Roads of ruction and rebellion!
 Routes of risk! Yes, simonpure!
Rocks and ruts and ridges,
 You must travel on detour.

But the road around is better
 Than the one that goes straight through;
We'll be happier by doing
 As the signboard says to do,
For the short way is so pitted
 With delay, you may be sure,
Though the side road isn't pavement,
 It is better to detour.

Life is like a highway!

Times of sadness and despair
Send us here and there detouring

On the roads of poor repair,
But it's better not to murmur,

Not to threaten and adjure;
With an eye fixed on the future,
It is wiser to detour.



SAY SOMETHING GOOD

SAY something good!
You've said too much that was gruff,
A little of that is enough,
Too much, I opine,
For the little vine
Of love can't grow on such.
You could alter your words if you would,
And - - say something good!

Praise the man!
You've told him all that was wrong,
So bridle your bitter tongue,
Say, "Fine! That was right!"
And see the light
Of thanks come into his eye.
Your own heart would warm if you would,
If only you'd say something good.

Kiss the hand
That has toiled for you through the years,
The cheek of too many tears,
And o'er your lip
New love will trip
To kiss the soul of you.
Life would be new if you would,
If only you'd say something good.

Say something good!
Living would rise from the course,
From bitterness and divorce
If only we
Might come to see
That people hunger for praise.
They'd be your slaves if you would,
If only you'd say something good.





BREAKING THE BROKEN

THE mast of his little toy ship got broke,
He hammered the boat with his fist
Till the guns and rigging and painted port-holes
Lay in a sorry twist.

He spoke a harsh word to his faithful wife,
For an error on her part,
And there at his feet lay a trembling thing,
The wreck of a loving heart.

Mistakes are not mended with bitterness,
Wrong is not righted, but worse,
The hand and the soul are harmed and hurt
By the blow and the hateful curse.

I MET A MAN

I MET a man, who lived by the road,
 "By the side of the highway of Life,"
In a place where the fortunes and honors were few,
 Where burdens and struggles were rife.
And he pointed for me the way I should go,
 I had heedlessly wandered afield,
I looked, and behold, my vision and way
 By guidance of his stood revealed.

I journeyed far but never forgot
 The one who met me that day,
Nor the thoughtful eye that followed the hand,
 As he pointed me on my way.
His visage was lined, his shoulders were stooped,
 His voice bore signs of care,
There were years of service writ in the looks
 Of the man who met me there.

Ah me, 'tis good to have found in life,
 By the grace of the Infinite's plan,
The essence of all that is ever worth while,
 Wrought-out in a God-fearing man.
For he was so sturdy, this man that I met,
 So fearless, so faithful, so just,
That I hope to follow the path pointed out—
 It is more than a hope—*I must!*

MY CREED

WHO is right, who is wrong?
Who is weak, who is strong?
Who, in all this madd'ning throng,
Has *the* truth that leads to God?
You've a formulated creed,
And maintain it meets your need.
You aver that none, indeed,
Can climb to God but through *your* faith.
Who shall say, "He does not pray!"
If not done some special way?
Who appointed *you* to say,
"Yonder souls are lost in sin?"
How can finite, groping clod
Ever find his peace in God,
If he seeks to mill and plod
Through the creeds that *men* conceive?
Live your life of creed and whim!
I seek God, and ask of Him
Faith and peace when ways grow dim,
For justice with *my* righteousness.
This is *my* way. Don't trouble me
With eyes of yours through which to see!
God gave my soul the urge to be
At one with Him—and that's enough!



MY WET WEATHER PRAYER

PLAGUED, if it ain't rained a lot of late!

Jes rain, rain, rain!

And I keep wishin' it would stop, sometime!

All in vain, vain, vain!

Jim Riley may never have lifted his voice

Against the weather that seemed God's choice,

But I'm made-up of different clay

And got a different word to say.

It ain't no use to growl and complain,

If God sends rain, why, we'll take the rain,

For we ain't got umbrellas enough

To make any show at turnin' the stuff,

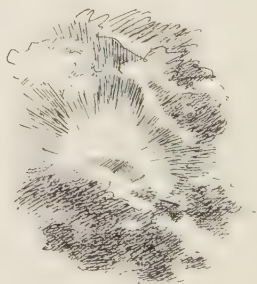
But while He's sortin' the weather up there

I'm going to send up a first class prayer:

"Dear Lord, while you're sortin', purty soon, just for fun,

Turn off the rain and send us the sun."

It rained all night, and it's rained all day!
Jes rain, rain, rain!
I needed to work, but I'm countin' rain-drops
On the pane, pane, pane!
Now, I know you'll think I'm an ingrate or worse,
And tryin' to run the universe,
Maybe so, but surely there ain't no sense
To rain till it stands to the top of the fence.
It's rained for a month—purt nigh six weeks
Since the grim, old heavens sprung these leaks.
I know we need rain, but it looks to me
Like the weatherman's usin' the wrong recipe.
You may be content with affairs up there,
But if you're not, let's send up this prayer:
"Dear Lord, while you're sortin', purty soon. just for fun,
Turn off the rain and send us the sun."



DAY OF DAYS ON THE FARM

OUT in the barnlot, they hurry around
Over the frosty, frozen ground,
Heating the water, sharp'ning their knives,
Yelling like mad to their busy wives,
This is the day of days on the farm!

"Reckon Bill Williams can shoot today?"
Guess he'd best try the first anyway.
Crack! And he hit him above the rough snout!
"Into the water, boys! Now drag him out!"
Never such a day as this on the farm!

Scraping and dressing, each man knows his part,
Works at his task with a willing heart.
Save a bladder for the kids' balloon,
They'll be home from school pretty soon;
Tough to be away such a day on the farm!

Mixing the sausage is a woman's task—
What better job could a woman ask?
Fixing to tempt a man's appetite,
Seas'ning and stuffing for future delight;
Women wouldn't miss this day on the farm!

Late in the night, standing there by the fire,
Stirring the lard, I want to inquire,
Ever see a time like this to dream,
Figure out plans for the year by the ream?
Makes a fine end to this day on the farm!



DINNER MUSIC

DOWN to Indi'noplus, at them big stone-front hotels,
Where they serve them sample dinners to a lot of social swells,
They haf to have some music, so's to help the food go down—
That's what a fellow suffers from livin' in a town—
But out here in the country, we don't need no or-ches-tray
To season up our victuals in that hypodermic way,
For we don't find no trouble, it is all so awful good,
That a person keeps on eatin' and not stoppin' when he should.
Yet there is a dinner music, for which a fellow waits—
That's the scrapin' of the skillet and the rattle of the plates.

Just sit around till half past one, or maybe two,
So hungry for your dinner that you don't know what to do,
And thinkin' you might offer some advice or kindly aid
On gettin'-up the victuals if you knew how they wuz made.
But, if you should try a noodle, it would make a first class
 whang,
And you couldn't fry a chicken if you knew you'd haf to hang.
So you sit it out in patience—you will hear it afterwhile,
And 'twould start the sugar water in an elder-berry spile,
It's the kind of dinner music that a hungry man awaits—
The scrapin' of the skillet and the rattle of the plates.

Although you sit there patient, very sainted and refined,
You hunger for it somehow, with it always on your mind,
And you'll tell the world it's welcome, just as welcome as the
 spring,
For it prophesies the changing of a now existing thing;
It foreshadows future pleasure, plain as writing on the wall,
And foretells the speedy coming of the cherished dinner call;
I will speak it on the housetops, I will write it with my pen,
No such music can be sounded from the instruments of men,
For the fellow who is hungry, while he sits around and waits,
As the scrapin' of the skillet and the rattle of the plates.

THE GRIPPE

I've got the grippe!
Oh me!
My oh!
In the grip of the grippe,
I feel like a whip
That's nothing but stock, you know.
The lash is gone, the sting is gone,
 There's nothing left but me.
My! oh me! but I am sick—
 And as weak as I can be!

We're treating the grippe!
My oh!
Oh me!
When I'm gripped by the grippe,
I must sit and sip
Hot lemonade and ginger tea;
And dangle my feet in a hot foot-bath,
 Then go to bed and sweat;
And swallow pills and syrup and drops—
 We haven't tried ars'nic, yet!

I've still got the grippe!
Oh me!
My oh!
The grip of the grippe
Ain't loosened a bit,
And my head's like a three-ring show.
My knees are weak, my bones all ache,
My eyes are full of tears—
I hope I've had enough of this
To last me several years.



NOISES AT THE FAIR

"IF you're hot and dusty, feelin' 'thusty,'
Get an ice-cold drink of sweet lemonade."
With a nasal twang he meets you everywhere,
He gets up early and he opens the fair—
It's the lemonade man, and he sings a song:
"You'd better get a drink as you pass along."

With a bit of cranking, tractors go clanking
Through their paces for the farmers looking on.
There's a little gruff puff, and the wheels fly around—
My, how the thing turns-up the ground!
Then you talk with the agent, and all's very nice,
But you change your mind when he tells you the price.

"Oh, it's good and greasy, goes down easy!
Get your butter-krisp corn at five-a-bag!"
It seems that my boys are hollow to their toes,
And can eat more corn than the nation grows.
But he yells all day near the fat man's show:
"Oh, it's pure as love, and as white as snow!"

"Now dinner's ready, dinner's ready—
A whole hog and a biscuit for a dime!"
It's the lunchman's yell, and his sales increase
When he throws hamburgers in the rancid grease.
He yells and sells, and sells and yells,
And eats his own meals at the swell hotels.

The political pounders and the merry-go-rounders
Each add to the noise at the fair;
There's a quack from the ducks, and a cackle from the hens,
Along with the grunts and the bellows in the pens;
While the band plays a tune near the old grand-stand
Along comes a man with balloons in his hand.

"Get your gebo candy, fine and dandy!
A great - - big - - lick for half a dime!"
He mingles his yell with the clown-band's noise,
And I buy a whistle for each of the boys.
Then they pelt me in the back with their come-back-balls,
Whistle and yell through the lanes and the halls.

There are noises a-plenty, fifteen or twenty,
That you hear on the old fairgrounds.
The auto men shout, and the whirl-a-gigs grind,
There are salesmen's talk of every kind,
Till I hear all the noises in my troubled sleep,
From the lemonade yell to the bleat of the sheep.



WATCHING A FOWL SITUATION

WHAT is my business? Oh, everyone knows!
I'm here on the fence to frighten the crows
And the hawks that circle and circle up there,
Like they's tryin' to read our bill o' fare.
The talk they get from an old ruffled hen
Don't have much weight with that class of "men."

But when my arms wave in the breeze's control,
And my legs sorto slap around the rough pole
That holds me together, coat, pants and vest,
And I get a fresh breath in my burlap chest,
You all can depend on a nice supply
Of yellow-legged chicken for the Fourth of July.

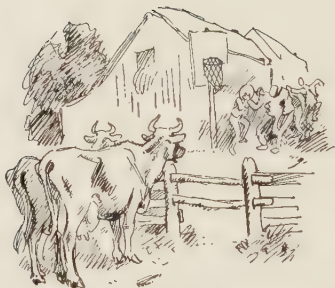
For hawks and crows, they all knows
That I'm much meaner than you suppose.
Why, I'm the ghost of a man back there
That could follow and kill 'em clean up in the air,
So they're afraid to come, you see,
Within a half mile of me.

Besides bein' watchful, I'm a good moral jay,
And never do nothin' that's out of the way;
I never drink, smoke or get into scraps,

And I'll go to church next winter—perhaps—
When my summer work's done I'll go with you
And we'll sit together in the "amen" pew.

The only thing I do that isn't just right
Is the way I stay out so late at night,
But my woman knows—she works for Paul Pugh
And has to stay out the same as I do.
Our alarm clock's broke, so we stay up all night
To be on the job as soon as it's light.





WORK'S RIVAL

WORK has a rival in the barn-lot today,
A rival that seems to have come to stay.
He's not very much in the way of looks,
But he's surely a rival to work and books.

A board,

A hoop,

And a white oak pole;

No hogs,

No sheep,

No wood, no coal!

They'll come to their meals, but that's about all,
And all they talk is basketball.
If we inject a bit of advice,
They look at us like a cake of ice.

The team,
The coach,
And the tournaments;
Not hay,
Not corn,
Nor implements!

But they're winnin' now and it looks like they'd
Be goin' up there where the big teams played,
And me, like a boiler poppin' off steam,
A-goin' ever' night to root for the team!

No hogs,
No sheep,
No wood, no coal;
The team,
The game,
And the winnin' goal!



DECORATION DAY

A CHEER for the living,
A flower for the dead,
With the folds of Old Glory
Laughing down overhead;
A command and a volley,
A tramp of feet,
In time with our hearts
And the drums that beat;
A column of soldiers,
The old and the new,
Is marching again
In public review.
Once more we pay honor
To the living and lost,
Both of them willing
To pay the last cost.
But when will humanity
Find its release
From war's useless carnage,
And murder of Peace?
Oh, teach us, dear Father,
To learn of Thy Son,
To settle our hates
Before they're begun.

OUT AROUND THE BARN

WHERE your treasures are, there will your heart be, too.
Them's words from Holy Writ, and I guess that they are true,
For in the winter time, I feel it's my "consarn"
To be carin' for the critters that are out around the barn.

Them's my treasures, every horse and pig and cow,
I've toiled for them all summer and I can't neglect them now.
Who am I to roast my shins, sit spinnin' of some yarn,
When I ought to be a-tendin' to the critters 'round the barn?

And then, too, I like to be about the winter chores,
The things that summer put off doin' out of doors;
And it's comfortin' to me, when the women talk and darn,
To be doin' of some "jimmin'," out around the barn.

Out around the barn! Feed and clean and make repairs!
'Tain't no time to fit my carcass into these here easy chairs.
Why, this is part o' livin', and I make it my "consarn"
To be carin' for the critters that are out around the barn.

WHEN IT RAINS

BELIEVE me, I am grumpy
 When it rains,
If the skies are always lumpy
 And it rains
Lazy-like, a drop a minute,
And old Sol ain't never in it,
Better pipe your hat and tin it
If you want to shed the water
 Of such rains.

I don't mind in days of summer
 If it rains;
Should it make your crop a hummer,
 Let it rain!
Though it pours and spoils my pleasure,
I don't grumble, since a treasure
Comes to you in gospel measure,
And I'll sing with you our praises
 When it rains.

But this grizzled, drippy weather!
 When it rains
Like the clouds had got together
 With their brains;
Made a plan to wreck the season
By their pesky, high-hand treason,

And I can't assign the reason—
But I'm always feeling grumpy
 When it rains.

You may be so optimistic,
 When it rains,
That you're never pessimistic,
 When it rains.
Weather's always to your notion,
You could farm the Indian Ocean
And not feel the least commotion
 When it rains.

But I tell you I am grumpy
 When it rains,—
If the skies are always lumpy
 And it rains.
Why, it mildews every feeling!
Not a bit of joy comes stealing
Through my frame, from core to peeling,
But I always grin and bear it
 When it rains.



YOU FOLKS MUST COME AN' SEE US

WHEN you've spent the day with country friends,
A body could scarce believe
That there could be so much to say
When you're loaded up to leave,
And last of all you'll hear these words,
As you start the family bus,
"Well, come again." "Oh yes, we will.
You folks must come an' see us."

“Well, come again.” What a glad refrain
To the song of fellowship
That friends may sing, that never ends
Where there is comradeship!
We like to come, and we like to feel
That we can “come again,”
And it warms the heart of everyone
Like an anthem’s grand, “amen.”

We answer back, “Yes, come an’ see us,”
We know it’s not in vain,
You’ll come to spend a day with us
And then you’ll come again.
So back and forth and time about
We visit each other here,
Till life plays out its melodies
And friendships disappear.

I wonder, if in heaven to come
We’ll visit around this way,
And hear such words as we used to hear
When we’re ready to start away?
I know that things will be greatly changed
But I wish it ever thus,
“Well, come again.” “Oh yes, we will.
You folks must come an’ see us.”



